

1977/78 • NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

SPORT FISHING GUIDE



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Fish and Wildlife Service
Government of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife NWT

POLARPAM

31769

Angling Licence Fees

Resident Angling Licence\$ 3.00
Non-resident Angling Licence10.00

Angling licences are not required for residents under the age of 16 or for non-residents under 16 who are accompanied by another person who holds a licence.

If you lose your licence, another must be purchased.

"Angling" means fishing by the use of rod, lure, and hook, or a hook and line held in the hand.

No angling licence is valid unless signed by the licensee.

An angler must carry his or her licence and produce it at the request of an Officer.

Licences are available from Fisheries and Marine Service offices, most sport fishing lodges, sporting goods and hardware stores, as well as from the R.C.M.P. and from district offices of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Government of the Northwest Territories.

NOTE: All licences expire March 31 following the date of issue.

If you're a sport fisherman interested in the sport . . . the excitement . . . the thrill of the catch . . . play a part in our conservation program.

General Sport Fishing Regulations*

These regulations apply in all waters of the Northwest Territories and in the tidal waters of the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario.

1. No person shall take, be in possession of, or use live fish for bait when sport fishing.
2. No person shall use a gaff while sport fishing.
3. No person shall engage in sport fishing while he is acting as a hired guide for an angling or fishing party.

4. No person shall angle in open water with more than a single line or rod and line.

5. No person shall angle in ice-covered water with more than two lines, or two rods and lines, or have more than two hooks attached to one line and must remain within 50 yards of his line or lines.

6. No person shall fish by snagging.

7. No person shall catch, kill, molest or injure fish by using spears, arrows, gaffs, firearms, lights, sticks, stones, clubs, snares or hand nets (however hand nets may be used to land fish caught by angling).

8. No person shall waste any game fish which is suitable for food.

9. No person shall leave on the ice or in the water decaying fish or remnants thereof or any refuse from fishing.

DIP NETS FOR CISCO

10. Any person holding a sport or domestic fishing licence may use a dip net for taking cisco provided:

- a. width of hoop does not exceed three feet;
- b. net is not used to take any species of fish other than cisco;
- c. aggregate number of cisco so taken does not exceed 50;
- d. dip net is used ONLY during the period August 1 to December 31 in any year.

SPEAR FISHING

11. No person shall engage in spear fishing unless he is swimming.

12. A person fishing under a sport fishing licence shall:

- a. display the scuba diver's flag;
- b. not fish at a greater distance than a 100-foot radius from that flag;
- c. not fish closer than 300 feet from a swimmer, angler or group of swimmers and anglers.

13. All spears used under a sport fishing licence shall be tethered to the spear gun or person operating the spear by a line of adequate strength

to withstand all tensions within the operating potential of the spear gun or hand operated spear.

14. The spear shaft shall be tethered to the gun or person using the spear by a line not exceeding 15 feet in length.

15. No person shall use explosive charges or gas contained in a bottle or cartridge as a propellant in a spear fishing gun.

**Extracted from the Northwest Territories' Fishery Regulations.*

NOTE: The above regulations are provided for general guidance only. The Northwest Territories Fisheries Regulations should be consulted for more complete information.

Catch and Possession Limits

Type of Fish	Daily Maximum Limit	Maximum Possession Limit	Type of Fish	Daily Maximum Limit	Maximum Possession Limit
Lake Trout	3	5	Dolly Varden	4	7
Grayling	5	10	Brook Trout	5	10
Walleye	5	10	Inconnu	5	10
Northern Pike	5	10	Goldeye	5	10
Humpback and Broad Whitefish	10	20	All Ciscoes	50	50
			Arctic Char*	4	7

* except in waters of Tree River entering Coronation Gulf (85 miles east of Coppermine) where maximum limits are . . . daily 2, possession 2

NOTE: For the purpose of determining possession limits, two fillets shall be deemed to be taken from one fish. The above limits apply to both angling and spear fishing.

MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT FOR ARCTIC GRAYLING*

No person shall kill or have in possession any angled Arctic grayling less than fourteen inches in fork length in that portion of the Mackenzie River and tributary streams lying west of a line drawn from Pointe de Roche to Slave Point and east of the inlet of Mills Lake.

Fork length is measured from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail fin.

The head and tail must remain attached to fish for which length limits are established while they are in the restricted area or until such fish have been checked by a Fishery Officer.



Lake Trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*)

The "laker" of the Territories is, by scientific definition, the same as the lake trout of southern Canada. But it's a much fiercer fighter. If you hook a small one — say, up to 10 pounds — it will probably stay near the surface, alternately diving and breaking water to try and throw the lure. A larger laker is more likely to run for deep water when hooked, and "bulldog" in the depths. You can catch them by spinning, casting or trolling, according to water conditions and your own inclination. But, for the ultimate in sport, try a flyrod and wet flies.

The most widely spread game in the Territories, the lake trout is found throughout the Mackenzie, Thelon, Back and Coppermine drainage systems. So far, most angling has been on Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes — each covering more than 10,000 square miles. But lakere are plentiful, and the sport spectacular, in hundreds of fast-flowing rivers and streams.

The best trophy recorded has been a 65 pound lunker from Great Bear Lake. Many others have come close to this and 30-40 pounders are common. There is no doubt that plenty of world record breakers are lurking in the lakes of the Northwest Territories. The angler who will catch one could be you.



Great Northern Pike (*Esox lucius*)

Great Northerns are in abundance throughout the drainage systems of the Mackenzie and particularly in the Great Slave Lake area. As compared with southern Canada and northern U.S. there is a tendency among anglers in the Northwest Territories to neglect the Northern Pike. Most are too busy catching lake trout, Arctic Char, and grayling. But Northerns there certainly are, if you're a dedicated pike fisherman. They generally run between 5 and 15 pounds, but quite a few 30 and 40 pounders have been taken.



Arctic Char (*Salvelinus alpinus*)

This spectacular fighter is one of the least fished in North America. Yet, like its cousin, Salmon, it's an acclaimed delicacy to gourmets everywhere. Char is found in both salt and fresh waters of the Arctic that flow into the Arctic Ocean or Hudson Bay from Baffin Island on the east to the Yukon border on the west. The largest caught so far weighed over 30 pounds. 15 pounders are common in some rivers, but their average is usually 5 to 7 pounds.

Char is very streamlined, with dark green back shading to silvery sides and belly, and pinkish spots on the sides. At spawning time the male develops a protruding and hooked lower jaw, and the belly and sides may turn vivid orange-red. It can be taken with wet flies, but gold, silver or red lures are most often used with 6 to 8 pound test line on a spinning reel.

Not a big jumper, char will often take off 100 yards of line in one strong drive, then try to shake the lure on the surface. Sometimes, after being brought in quietly almost to shore, it will suddenly turn and drive madly out to sea again. Hence its reputation as a rod and line breaker.



Inconnu (*Stenodus leucichthys mackenziei*)

Appropriately named the "unknown" by Alexander MacKenzie's French-Canadian voyageurs, the inconnu is still largely unknown to most anglers. A member of the whitefish family, it somewhat resembles a large herring, with dark back, silvery sides and large scales. Reports vary on the eating and sporting qualities of coney (or sheefish) but many are caught in the Hay River in May or early June after break-up — usually on spoons or spinning lures. Also common in the Big Buffalo, Taltson, and Anderson rivers and in the Mackenzie Delta, inconnu average 9 to 20 pounds, although commercial fishermen report some over 70.



Arctic Grayling (*Thymallus arcticus signifer*)

Grayling is a true northern fish. It is particularly common in the Mackenzie, Coppermine, Anderson, Thelon and Back drainages. During the summer, you'll catch grayling in cold swift rivers and in bays of some larger lakes. A spectacular acrobat, grayling provides the most exciting action a fly-fisherman can find anywhere. It puts on a short but wild display when hooked, usually clearing the water in two or three good jumps. It is generally fairly easy to catch, but sometimes its unpredictable behaviour, along with its small soft mouth, calls for the utmost in angling skill.

Grayling is one of the world's most beautiful fish, dark blue on the back and purple grey on the sides. An outstanding characteristic is large sail-like, highly coloured dorsal fin: blackish grey with a bright red band on the upper edge and scattered blue and violet spots. It is also the most delicious eating.

It will take wet or dry flies readily and some types of small metal lures. Recommended flies include the Par Bell, Black Gnat, Silver Doctore, Gray and Brown Hackles, and Light and Dark Cahils on a number 10 or 12 hook. When the fish are feeding on larvae, nymphs are particularly effective.

Average weights are from 1 to 2 pounds, but the world record Arctic grayling was a 5 pounder from the Great Slave Lake area.



Walleye (*Stizostedion vitreum*)

Also known as dore, pickerel or yellow pike-perch, walleye are plentiful in smaller lakes around Hay River and Yellowknife, and to a lesser extent farther north. They generally run up to 5 pounds and are fished mainly by resident anglers.

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Reward For Tagged Fish

Many fish in our northern waters are tagged for conservation studies. With the information we collected through fishery tags, we're able to protect the fish from over-exploitation and the adverse effects of industrial development.

If you catch a fish that's been tagged, mail the tag along to us. Include a brief note telling us:

1. where caught; 2. date caught; 3. length; 4. weight; 5. lure used. We'll send you a reward as a thank you. Send the information and tag to:

**Fisheries and Marine Service,
Box 2310, Yellowknife, N.W.T.**

Use A Barbless Hook

Barbed hooks are a mixed blessing. Imbedded deep in the gullet or in some other sensitive spot, their safe removal is difficult if not often impossible. Many fish thus hooked are released only to swim away and die. We recommend the barbs on your hooks be filed off or squeezed in with pliers.

Play it like a true sportsman. Carefully release the fish after the catch. Keep our waters a sportsman's paradise. And come back next year to enjoy the fishing.

CREEL CENSUS PROGRAMS

The Fisheries and Marine Service is conducting creel census studies in the Northwest Territories to gather catch and effort statistics as well as biological data on game fishes. This is being done as part of a continuing program to ensure viable sport fisheries in the north for future generations of anglers.

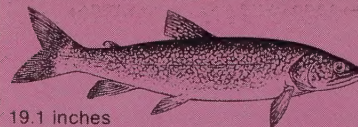
Your anticipated co-operation is greatly appreciated.

The fisheries and resources of the Northwest Territories are under the administration of the Fisheries and Marine Service of the Department of the Environment, Government of Canada, for the benefit of all Canadians.

Same Age — Different Waters

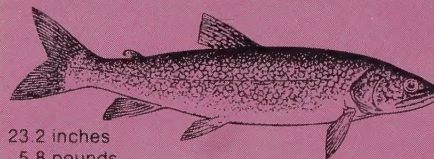
Fish grow slowly in our cold northern waters as this comparison of a ten-year-old Lake Trout shows:

GREAT BEAR LAKE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



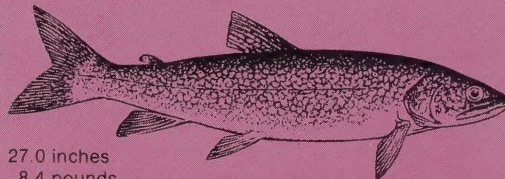
19.1 inches
2.1 pounds

LAC LA RONGE, SASKATCHEWAN



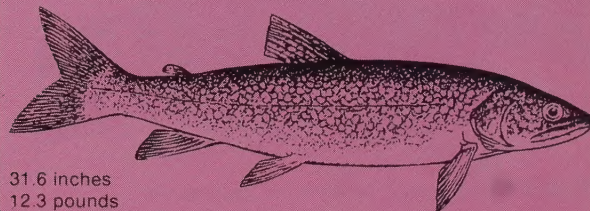
23.2 inches
5.8 pounds

LAKE MICHIGAN



27.0 inches
8.4 pounds

FISH LAKE, UTAH



31.6 inches
12.3 pounds

As clearly indicated here, there is a vast difference between growth rates in northern and southern waters. Besides a lack of variety in the number of different species in the Northwest Territories, there is also an extremely slow growth rate. This, plus the emphasis in sport fishing on larger, trophy fish, makes the replacement rate of fish in northern waters extremely slow.